

affordable coverage for drug costs. Perhaps most importantly for South Dakota's Medicare beneficiaries, the plan must ensure access for beneficiaries in rural and hard-to-serve areas including incentives to rural pharmacies and the private entity serving those areas to ensure rapid delivery of prescription drugs.

I believe that these efforts are both comprehensive and achievable in the 107th Congress, and I will work closely with my colleagues to accomplish my personal goal of ensuring access to affordable prescription drugs for all Medicare beneficiaries both in South Dakota and around the Nation.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Monday, March 19, 2001, the Federal debt stood at \$5,729,611,586,294.55, five trillion, seven hundred twenty-nine billion, six hundred eleven million, five hundred eighty-six thousand, two hundred ninety-four dollars and fifty-five cents.

Five years ago, March 19, 1996, the Federal debt stood at \$5,058,839,000,000, Five trillion, fifty-eight billion, eight hundred thirty-nine million.

Ten years ago, March 19, 1991, the Federal debt stood at \$3,447,165,000,000, three trillion, four hundred forty-seven billion, one hundred sixty-five million.

Fifteen years ago, March 19, 1986, the Federal debt stood at \$1,982,540,000,000, one trillion, nine hundred eighty-two billion, five hundred forty million.

Twenty-five years ago, March 19, 1976, the Federal debt stood at \$599,190,000,000, five hundred ninety-nine billion, one hundred ninety million, which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion—\$5,130,421,586,294.55, five trillion, one hundred thirty billion, four hundred twenty-one million, five hundred eighty-six thousand, two hundred ninety-four dollars and fifty-five cents, during the past 25 years.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

A TRIBUTE TO GRACE COLE

• Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I'm sad to inform my colleagues that on Saturday, March 17th, Washington State lost a great advocate for families, and I lost both a good friend and mentor, with the passing of Grace Cole.

At this difficult time, my heart goes out to her family including her two brothers, four sons, four daughters in law, and six grandchildren. I want them to know what the rest of us have known for years: Grace Cole made a difference. We are proud of her and grateful for all she did. And even though she's no longer with us, her activism and her passion live on in the men and women she led into public service.

Well-known and well-loved in Shoreline, in Olympia, and among families and educators throughout our State, Grace Cole set a new standard for public service with strong words and a soft heart. She led the way for advocates like me to follow her from the local school board to the Washington State legislature. And most important, she made a difference for thousands of families throughout our state by standing up for education, the environment and social justice.

Mr. President, today moms and dads who serve their communities in Washington State know they can go on to serve at the State and Federal level. Years ago, however, that path wasn't so clear. Grace Cole blazed that trail and then helped others like me follow her into public service. When I look at the Washington state legislature, I see the impact Grace Cole has made.

I first met Grace in the early 1980s when I started attending Shoreline School Board meetings. During her many years of service on the school board, Grace was a strong and honest voice who always came down on the side of our children.

When I decided to run for the Shoreline School Board, Grace encouraged me and counseled me. During the time I served with Grace on the school board, she always made sure we were acting in the best interests of those we served. Grace knew just what to say, and on many occasions, her wise words helped ease tense moments.

In 1983, Grace was appointed to the House of Representatives. She was re-elected seven times and retired in 1998. As long as Grace served in the House, I knew Washington's children had a strong advocate.

In 1987, I decided to run for the Washington State Senate. Once again, Grace was there for me as a counselor, a supporter, and a friend. Even though she was running for reelection at the same time, Grace took the time to make sure that I and others could follow in her footsteps. That is the way Grace was. She set a path and helped us follow it.

Grace Cole also set a new standard for what it means to be an outstanding school board member. In fact, new members of the Shoreline School Board are often measured by the "Grace Cole Standard." I've heard people say of new members, "She'll be great—just like Grace Cole." In 1998, the Shoreline School Board honored Grace with its first Distinguished Service Award.

What made Grace Cole such an icon? First, she knew how to lead. She listened to all sides, helped bring people together, and knew how to put people at ease. She was also a community builder. She worked side-by-side with other parents to pass school levies. She put labels on letters and walked through neighborhoods knocking on doors to ensure voters would go to the polls.

Most of all, Grace was compassionate and caring. Her passion for children drove everything she did. I remember her bill in the state legislature to outlaw spanking in schools. It seemed like such an uphill battle, but Grace would always say, "Kids need to learn by example." She said that over and over again for years until her bill finally passed. The bill's opponents eventually went along because they realized that Grace Cole would never give up on something she believed in.

In the State legislature, Grace won the respect of all lawmakers on both sides of the aisle. I knew that her time in the House was a personal sacrifice for her. She had to leave her family in Shoreline to work long hours in Olympia, then return home to attend community meetings and to help others. During all her public service though, Grace made sure to always put her kids first.

For me, Grace was a perfect example of selfless community service. Today's leaders are too often judged on how much press they get or how "visible" they are. Grace was the person who worked behind the scenes to make people's lives better.

I will miss Grace. She always knew the right thing to say, and she was never afraid of tough votes. She didn't have to be. She knew to do the right thing. Grace showed me and countless others the path to public service. Over the years, so many have followed her—starting in PTA, serving on the school board, and then going to Olympia to fight for their communities.

I know that at this difficult time her four sons and their families feel tremendous sorrow. We all do, but through her work Grace left us so much to be proud of: a strong community of good schools, good neighborhoods, and good friends.

Grace had such a strong and positive spirit that I have a feeling wherever she is, she's organizing a coffee get-together to make sure everyone is doing the right thing. If there are envelopes to lick, phone calls to make, or laws to write, I am sure Grace is making sure it gets done.

I feel fortunate to have known Grace. I am proud to call her a mentor and guide, and I will miss her greatly.●

RECOGNITION OF NORMA LEA MIHALEVICH

• Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I rise to make a few remarks regarding the tremendous contributions Norma Lea Mihalevich has made to her community, her state, and to public education.

It isn't often that we can recognize someone who has devoted her life to public service, but Norma Lea Mihalevich has done just that. As a lifelong resident of Pulaski County in Missouri, Norma Lea has spent the